



Background

What is the Rhode Island Research Alliance (RIRA)?

The RI Research Alliance is a program that was created by the Science and Technology Advisory Council to act as a platform for promoting collaboration, maximizing state and federal investment in research and enhancing the state's R&D-related economic development opportunities. By promoting collaboration among the state's research universities, research hospitals, business community and government agencies, the Alliance supports current research activities, strengthens RI's ability to attract federal and corporate research investment for new projects and spurs economic development and job growth.

What is the purpose of RIRA's Collaborative Research Grants?

The Collaborative Research Grant program provides funding to projects that lead to major new research opportunities that can be supported by federal agencies, corporations and/or foundations or contribute to current or future economic development of the state through technology development and commercialization. Projects with strong translational components and those that focus on infrastructure development that advance the competitiveness of RI researchers to secure additional funding awards are encouraged.

General Grant Information

Who is eligible to apply for a Collaborative Research Grant?

Any Rhode Island research institution, including academic, medical or business and government organizations are eligible to apply. Applications must be collaborative with at least two distinct organizations, one of which shall be a Rhode Island institute of higher education or hospital, which will serve as the fiduciary agent for the grant.

How much funding is available?

Approximately \$1,500,000 is available to support collaborative projects that propose work in the three core sectors identified by the Rhode Island Science and Technology Strategic Plan as areas of core strength for the State: marine sciences, life sciences and energy and the environment. Approximately \$800,000 of these funds are in collaboration with the RI NSF EPSCoR grant and will be dedicated to projects that focus on the research themes of RI NSF EPSCoR and/or utilize the existing three RI NSF EPSCoR Centers. Those themes are: marine life sciences, climate change effects on marine life especially in Narragansett Bay, and the use of technologies and approaches such as

genomics, proteomics, cyber-infrastructure, bioinformatics, scientific visualization and computational biology to address the scientific questions at the heart of the RI NSF EPSCoR grant. More information on the RI NSF EPSCoR award can be found at www.riepscor.org

What is the maximum amount that can be requested:

Maximum award per grant is \$200,000.

What activities can be funded by the proposal?

The Collaborative Grant Award Program's funds can be used to support personnel – professional and student; equipment; supplies and materials; and miscellaneous expenses such as travel costs, conference registrations and publications. These grants fund only direct costs associated with the proposed activity. No indirect costs are allowed under this grant.

Are proposals to purchase shared equipment welcomed?

Yes. Proposals must show how the purchase of a shared piece of equipment will benefit the statewide research network, leading to increased collaboration, innovation and/or commercialization throughout the state.

Do I have to submit a pre-proposal?

Yes. Pre-proposals are required for this grant award and must be submitted via email to RIResearchAlliance@riedc.com by November 21, 2011 (4:30 p.m. ET). The subject line should read: Last name, First name, Pre-proposal (i.e. Smith, Christine, Pre-Proposal).

How will I be notified if my team has been selected to submit a final proposal?

All PIs or team leaders will be notified by email regarding the success or declination of their pre-proposal.

How do I submit my final proposal?

Teams that are invited to submit a final proposal will receive instructions on how to use the online submission tool found on the [STAC website](#). Final proposal submission deadline is January 26, 2012 (due by 4:30 p.m. ET). A hard copy of the full proposal with original signatures is also required and should be submitted no later than February 2, 2012. Hard copies should be mailed to:

Ms. Christine M.B. Smith
315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101
Providence, RI 02908

How will I be notified if my team has been selected?

All PIs or team leaders will be notified by email of the success or declination of their grant proposal.

When will the awards be announced?

Awards will be announced in March 2012.

How long is the grant performance period?

Funding is for a twelve-month period.

How are the awardees selected?

Each proposal undergoes two external peer reviews and a selection committee review. Proposals are evaluated using two National Science Board approved merit criteria: intellectual merit and the broader impacts of the proposed research activity.

For intellectual merit, the proposal will be evaluated based on how important the activity is to advancing knowledge or understanding within its own field or across different fields; how well qualified the team is to conduct the activity; to what extent the activity suggests and explores creative and original concepts and how well organized the activity is.

For broader impacts, the proposal evaluation will consider how well the proposed activity advances discovery and understanding; whether the project is catalytic in nature and has the potential to lead to major new research opportunities that can be supported by federal agencies, corporations and/or foundations; whether the proposed activity has significant potential for the attraction of follow-on investment and/or technology development/commercialization; whether the proposed activity clearly shows how the combined efforts of the institutions can lead to results that could not be achieved by either alone; and whether the proposed activity advances state-wide research capacity.

Additional criteria that will be considered include: how well the proposed activity advances the objectives of the Research Alliance including whether the proposed activity enhances efforts to receive additional awards and advances the competitiveness of scientists in RI; how broadly the outcome of the proposal will impact the greater public; how the activity complements other state-wide activities; and how the activity aligns with the core strengths identified by the [RI Science and Technology Strategic Plan](#).

Can a research team resubmit a previously rejected application?

Research teams can submit a revised proposal that has previously been rejected. Peer reviews will be returned to the PIs of each proposal so the team can better assess the rejected proposal's strengths and weaknesses.

If awarded, can teams request a no-cost extension if needed?

Yes, research teams can request a no-cost extension for up to 6 months at the culmination of the grant year. The team must submit this request, along with an explanation as to why the extension is necessary, to the Council's Executive Director, Christine Smith.

What happens to any residual funds at the end of the grant year?

The funds must be returned to the grantor.

What kind of reporting criteria are teams required to submit?

Teams are required to submit two progress reports as well as one final report. Reports should clearly state the project's original objectives, what objectives have been completed thus far, and the next steps the team plans to accomplish. Teams should also document any other successes such as: presentations, publications, student training, patents filed, licenses acquired, companies created, and/or any monies secured from outside funders.

Can a research team/PI be awarded more than once?

Research teams or PIs may apply to the Collaborative Grant Award program again if they are seeking to fund another research objective. Project continuation proposals will not be accepted.

Can I be a member of more than one proposal in any grant cycle?

Yes, individuals can serve as PI or co-PI on multiple proposals.

Who can I contact if I have more questions?

Please contact [Christine Smith](#) at (401) 278-9197 for more information about this and other STAC/RIRA programs.

RIRA Program Information

How many awards have been granted over the years?

Throughout the past four years the RIRA has awarded \$6.5 million to thirty eight teams of researchers.

How many institutions have been represented?

Over the past four years thirty-five research institutions have been represented.

How much out-of-state follow on funding has been brought into the state as a result of this program?

Over the past four years the awardees together have brought in approximately \$10 million from outside funding sources.

What is the broad agency disbursement of funds for this RIRA program?

The majority of RIRA funding through the Collaborative Grant Awards Program is awarded to institutes of higher education which have received just under sixty percent. The remainder of funds has been awarded to private companies/industry members (22%) and hospitals (19%).

What has the Program's award funding supported?

The Collaborative Grant Award Program's funds have supported personnel – professional and student (60%); equipment; supplies and materials (37%); and miscellaneous expenses such as travel costs, conference registrations and publications (3%). These grants cover only direct costs. No indirect costs are allowed.